

Denise Surratt Taylor

# PIECES OF ME A PERFECT FIT

Absolutely Nothing Is Wasted of our Lives

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**Selina Pate, community leader and former Coordinator of Christian Women Job Corp (CWJC) Gastonia, NC**

This book inspires women especially in their quest for wholeness. When I was coordinator of CWJC, I witnessed strongholds that bound the women participants of Christian Women's Job Corp be loosened as they discovered that their conflicts can be resolved. God truly has a plan and purpose for their lives. Denise is passionate about her calling, and God has bestowed upon her the time and energy to help women in need.

**Angela Dreher, Former Executive Director of As One Ministries Inc. Gastonia, NC**

Denise has done an excellent job of encouraging workshop participants to desire and pursue "wholeness." "Pieces of Me, A Perfect Fit" have allowed seminar participants the opportunity to safely dissect their lives (physically, emotionally, and spiritually), examine the pieces, and put them back together perfectly and wholly....

**Dr. Nita Evans, President of Nita Evans Enterprises, LLC McKinney, TX**

In the journey of life each of us encounters unexpected bruises and bumps. Fortunately, there are individuals like Denise who God has anointed to help navigate us through the painful places. *Pieces of Me, A Perfect Fit* offers practical wisdom for some of life's most difficult situations. Written in easy to understand language, this mentoring book is ideal for teens and adult use. Through a series of exercises at the end of each read, Denise effectively walks the reader through a process to discover personal wholeness. *Pieces of Me* speaks to the heart of every person; it speaks to the essence of the recovery of the human spirit.

Dr. Nita Evans, author, *Failure Is Not an Option: My Journey from Teen Mom to Ph.D.*

## NOTE FROM AUTHOR

“Pieces of Me, A Perfect Fit” is a conflict resolve program, a quest for transformation within our communities involving male and female, youth and adults. It is a tool to reach the lost, hurt, despaired, abused, and even those with unfamiliar issues. It addresses and brings to surface the many struggles that we all face. It is not a clinical therapy, but a program which help navigate individuals through situations that may cause pain and dysfunction.

The initiative is to uncover, address and create a national move of healing from old endings into new beginnings. The program has been designed and proven through an assessment of participants from various group settings. It started at the Christian Women Job Corp (CWJC) of Gastonia, North Carolina in 2004.

This booklet includes work sessions that are intended to bring renewal, refreshing, and transformation to the lives of those who seek wholeness and fulfillment. My hope is that all who participate in this program, gleam and apply its contents to their lives, and expect the next level of maturity to be a great one.

Enjoy!

Denise Surratt Taylor

# CHANGE IS A GOOD THING

## UNDERSTANDING CHANGE IN EVERY SITUATION

It has been said many times and in various ways, that change is a constant we can all count on. For example, we may experience change in our careers, families, relationships, and religious affiliations. At times, transitions we experience in this world can be described as leaving one wilderness only to enter another. In many cases, the changes we think will be for the better does not always prove so. No matter what the change may be, it involves transition that affects us all in some way.

Change is transition that involves uprooting and moving from one place to another. Our good friend Webster Dictionary gives us a clear definition of change: it means “to make or become different, to replace with another.” From this definition, we see that something will be or have been altered. Altered may mean to operate outside of an original plan – whatever that plan may be, or who may have made it. Or, altered may mean to operate within an original plan but get off track, off schedule, or even miss the mark intended.

The altering may come into our positions, routines, through people we know and meet; when dealing with issues that we’re not quite comfortable with, going places we’ve not been before, and conforming to rules that we are not quite use to. But in any case, we must not compromise while in our struggle. We must desire to move in the direction of fulfillment.

It is important to understand change. On a daily basis, while in this state of change, whether it be physical or mental, - our decision making and the ability to do the right

thing can get clouded with reoccurring acts and wrong turns if we don't understand the "dynamics of transition."

The "dynamics of transition" often come with an energy that forces us to move in a direction other than what we are accustomed to. Maybe a direction that is unexpected, as we move too quickly and impatiently. Frustration may become one's partner when this happens. The birth of frustration can mold a particular "idea" of you.

It is noted to say that we can become the products of our thoughts if we allow frustration to mold and shape an unauthentic model. Talk about framing our world. You think it, speak it, and it seems, you become it. Our thoughts have the propensity to ruin our lives' plans. We must not allow careless thoughts to carry us to any place that we don't want to travel, nor to a place that we definitely do not belong.

There is a great possibility that our minds will become weakened by the instigation of struggles. Humanism has a way of kicking in (our own way of thinking and own way of doing things) and began to react oblivious to our purpose in life. It seems that our senses will react to change as if they were an entity of their own.

For example, when we ***begin to hear change***, it is just human nature to become curious. Our inquisitive minds want to know. The closer we get to the sound of change; ***we begin to smell change***. You know how we get when the aroma is in the air, and the nose cannot help but follow the path to where that smell is leading us. ***This could be a potential problem because leading is a principle role***. There is a rule or code of conduct that is involved. What or who that pulls you into rendering your conduct, attitude or behavior contrary to what is right or righteous is a problem.

I'm not about to sugar coat anything for the world to believe that just a little indulgence into misconduct will be alright. NOT. We must be careful of what and who is leading us period. Being led or misled by anybody or anything while transitioning, especially if they are not part of our purpose, can hinder or delay our journey forward.

When trying to understand change, it'll be foolish to seek council from those who are blind to our situation. For a blind individual cannot give sighted directions. The sign can be pointing North and we end up going South simply because we followed the wrong directions that was given us. Too often we find ourselves led back into bondage, misery, and/or pain because we follow wrong council of others. Have you heard the saying, "Birds of a feather flock together?"

Sometimes we take the advice of those who are broken themselves. They may be dealing with the spirit of lust, the spirit of greed, the spirit of addiction, the spirit of brokenness, and many other adverse behaviors that can't and won't fix any problem – but may add to it. We must know who we deal with in order to submit to change's resolve. Always remember, change is inevitable.

Now, not only do we *hear and smell the sound of change*, but *our eyes photograph the image* of it. Then our minds capture the impression, hold it, not allowing its escape until we feel/touch, or rather, have the hands-on experience. Once our hands touch, there is only a matter of time before *tasting change*. Once we taste of change, we have just stepped into transition where there is no turning back from that experience.

As we breathe and eat, we experience change. But remember, CHANGE IS A GOOD THING. It's according to how we handle change is where our victory lies. In our everyday living, we will encounter obstacles, face challenges and risk and will be tested on every level.

As a reminder, we are not exempt from hardships and failures. Some say that hardships are steppingstones to getting to our next place in life. I say they are necessary to move us to our next level of maturity. There will be circumstances in life that are engineered to get us to move or transition into change. Just get ready and stay ready for it.

When you feel that trials and tests are overwhelming, count it all joy. It may be that it's time to transition to another level in life. You are getting ready to walk out an assignment that has been ordered just for your life. Whew!!

In this present-day experience, we as humans find it almost impossible to endure anything that we don't have to or complain when we do go through trials. The thought of suffering in any capacity is enough to tuck our tails, run and hid. Let's be honest. The thought of another arrow in our backs or hearts is more than we can stand. We want the triple assault that we've sustained and carried – unloaded and unloaded fast. The assault from abuse can weigh heavily in our emotions, causing wet pillows and lonely days and nights of being misunderstood. The assault of financial difficulties leaves the bucket empty of all necessities; the assault of addiction in any form beckons one to sell possessions and compromise into an unhealthy lifestyle. But remember, this too shall pass.

In our time of change or transition, there are going to be opportunities, advancements offered us, relationships that look like it's the right one baby, but before we embark on any adventure, we must first consider this, if it's not an opportunity that inspires wholeness and fulfillment, then it could very well be designed straight from hell to throw us off course, to weaken our ability to gain wisdom for success, and destroy our witness as a good citizen of this beautiful world.

Our faith too is tested at times. Faith can only become our intimate possession ***through conflict***. Don't think that we are exempt from going through struggles while going through change/transition. Sometimes in the fire we see only the flames and not the Solution. Stay the course.

There is an example/story in Scripture in the book of Deuteronomy 32<sup>nd</sup> chapter – we can see our lives in the lives of the Israelite people. They were chosen out of all mankind to be God's peculiar people. He had a delight and concern for them. God fitted these Israelites for great things designed just for them in the land of promise. They needed to



be **fitted** to enter the inheritance that God promised their ancestor Jacob. (Sounds like Pieces of Me, A Perfect Fit!) That's powerful!

As we look at the word fitted, it means to be suited for, correctly in place, in agreement to receive what is meant for us. Getting fitted sometimes means pain; the pain of being separated from the things or people that hindered us from walking in our full potential. Being fitted may mean being exposed so that forgiveness and healing can occur. Just be ready for anything.

There are contributions that we've given in our lives that have caused failures in the area of relationships, finances, and/or career. Our behaviors, attitudes, and decision making has not always been on point. As a matter of fact, we may have made complete messes of our lives. But now it's time to settle the score, even with ourselves. There must be some shedding of old endings to get to our new beginnings. Don't be afraid when moving from one place to another. Transition must come.

In transition we will face several things. First, we may enter foreign territory. The place may be so unfamiliar from that which we know and are comfortable. The Israelites went into this foreign land and was instructed to take over and destroy its inhabitants leaving nothing. That too must be our mindset. While moving forward into change, destroy all those things that are not part of the journey. It may be tempting enticements like money, fame, and even relationships that cause an unequally yoked union. Just a side note for the single individuals – don't be caught wide-eyed for the physical appearance of the opposite sex. As women, we are more than "lips, hips, and fingertips." And men, you are not a "sugar daddy to pay somebody's rent for a special favor." Hear this! We might be in a waste howling wilderness, but we will not compromise the journey with bad decisions and wrong turns. Enough is enough!

The example in the 32<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Deuteronomy tells us how hope is found, even in our wilderness

experience. We must trust God as life continues to unfold for us.

Verse 10: **He found him** in a desert land. Here we see the Lord honoring His promise to Jacob to bring his descendents into the Promised Land. **And in the waste howling wilderness** - The wilderness representing a poor state, bad character, the condition of barrenness and brokenness in the waste howling wilderness, these people were bond-slaves in Egypt and cried because of their oppression. (Sounds like a lot of wet pillows). They were destitute of all the necessities and comforts of life. Their situation was very evident to God. He was not ignorant of this fact. **So, He led him about** – this suggests that God was out front leading operations to get them to a definite end. When the Lord had them in the wilderness, He did not bring them directly to Canaan, but made them go a great way about so that He could instruct them, and to give them commandments as they were able to receive them. They could have gotten there sooner. But how many times have we been led into a place and not listened to instruction? Then it took us a longer period of time to get to our destination, which should have taken less time if only we had heeded instructions.

Take time to get directions and learn. And listen, learners must have time to learn. Whether in the storm or coming out of one, we must be able to receive help from those who are truly interested in helping us. We get so bent out of shape when change enters our lives. In times of a struggle(s), weather it, by cleaning out junk that doesn't belong. We must do away with the junk in our closets (minds). We cannot live fruitful lives with junkie closets. Junk begets junk, and when junk begets junk that equals more junk.

It's very important that we heed directions and instructions while in transition. For some it might be to find a financial or career advisor; nutritional health mentor; friendship coach, or any mentor that will help one to succeed.

We must learn to view our circumstances and situations from a healthy perspective. As we are in an altered state, be encouraged to face tough situations. Don't assume that since the journey is long-suffering that there is no end to it. Assumptions made can at times act as blinders and lead us to overlook what otherwise might be obvious.

Change is inevitable, sometimes by our hands and often by the hand of others. But it's that time – time to get moving. There is a story about a mother eagle who stirs up her nest in a continual movement. She awakens her young and shows them that they have wings to fly. She moves her babies so that they could leave that nest by pushing, beating, or prompting and then actually thrusting them into the open air. Her baby eagles just experienced change that was engineered by their mother. She wanted to educate and teach them how to fly and then soar.

Our nest must be stirred sometimes to get us to not only move, but soar. We don't know what we are capable of until we are thrust out of our complacency, laziness, inactivity, and past dysfunction. Learning to soar into greatness, wholeness, fulfillment, and peace is the utmost reward.

We don't have to walk around feeling misplaced, broken, depressed, insecure, lonely and unstable. Let's hold our head up high believing that we win regardless of our situation; no matter what the terrain, or if it looks hopeless. There is help awaiting. Accept it.

## INTRODUCTION

My inspiration to write and coin "*Pieces of Me, A Perfect Fit*," was in the year 2001. Its' birthing came while I was being plagued by certain issues. I had dealings with several minor and major issues where my past interfered with my future, making it difficult to experience joy. I lived through a season that insisted on holding my past against me. I felt chained to my struggles; so, I thought. But thank God I was not condemned to a life of discredit. For had it not been for my bad experiences, I would not have experienced the goodness that came from them.

I would still be living the mindset of gloom and doom with bouts of self pity. It felt horrible to live such a pale life where genuine affirmation was not felt. There were some that witnessed the weathered me, while others saw me as having the "wow" life.

No one truly saw or understood the impact of what divorce, for one thing, - and there were several things that were my thorn in the flesh. I think that was my biggest issue; to have gone through divorce and the dealings of all the baggage that accompanied it. Many emotions overwhelmed me. Again, thank God for His loving me through it all.

Often time people see the outside of a broken life, and not recognize what an individual feel inwardly. The perception is clear, although painted; it cannot offer a solution to stabilize the thoughts to consider a new mindset.

As my struggle pierced my soul, I realized that the season for PROCESS had begun. It is so funny how PROCESS will sometimes proceed without you. Despite obstacles and objections that may surface, PROCESS dares not to be hindered. Ready or not, here PROCESS comes. In fact, PROCESS is so confident in serving us that it takes it's time to render the job well done. It'll be up to us to allow this maintenance upon our lives.

Many of us have taken the road called PROCESS. Many have succeeded at getting there, while others may have failed simply because perseverance through long suffering, and at times, agony presented defeat. Some felt longevity was not worth it and relinquished their rights to be empowered by one of the best systems of relief. Others viewed the PROCESS as just that – another experience to endure.

My experience in PROCESS was to bring closure to certain people, places, and things. It caused more often than none, confusion, frustration, and isolation. Pieces of my life were scattered about and I had a very difficult time finding them. Some of those pieces were at the bank, financial difficulties; in relationships, divorce; at church, and a hurt that took nearly 4 years to recovery from. Both internal as well as external pressures kept me in a mess. I knew, for sure, that I had to come out of the nomadic mindset that often-caused runaway thoughts. I had no other choice but to find fulfillment. Lord knows, I wanted to be whole.

After deciding wholeness for myself, I begin to collect the scattered pieces of my life; place them together one by one. I now share them with you in this mentoring workbook. As you gleam from this method of mentoring, my prayers are that your puzzle would be just as awesome for you. Being mindful, that as life continues to unfold for you, continue to find other pieces of the puzzle and await the placement into their rightful position.

Finally, you will realize the wilderness journey was just your assignment. Walk it out because the best is yet to come. Don't be angry that you were tossed out of that complacent crib (nest) so you could fly. Just take up those wings of yours and soar. Remember that God is there to scup you up when your wings cannot bear another wind.

# CHANGE, IT'S A GOOD THING

Story example from Deuteronomy 32:10-12.

## Major Events:

- Moses being found in the desert land & waste howling wilderness.
- The stirring up.
- The Lord's leading.

Our desert land and waste howling wilderness:

1. The problem is louder (howling) than your solution.
2. Seemingly never ending.
3. Being misunderstood while in the state of brokenness.
4. Crying out to *anyone* for help.

The stirring up in our lives:

1. The situation begins to get tiresome.
2. The need to recovery begins inside.
3. Shaken from procrastination.
4. We are tossed out of our complacency.

Leading is a principle thing

1. Everyone cannot lead you.
2. Leading that is timely, accurate, and fulfilling.
3. Enjoy what works.

## Self-examination

### PIECES OF ME NOTES

1. Your Desert land and waste howling wilderness:

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2. The stirring up in your life:

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3. Who and what is leading your life:

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WEEK ONE

# DEEP ACHES

Identifying Goodbyes



## DEEP ACHES

### Identifying Goodbyes

“It just hurts all over” – I’ve heard this lots of times. I’ve even voiced this aloud to myself, and whoever would listen. Did they get tired of hearing it? I know I did. Just as painful as I’ve spoken my deep aches to others, the gratification of its negative appeal warranted isolation for myself and for those who were caught in the crossfire. No one wanted to be around that sort of energy. And you wonder why struggle is so painful and lonely!!!

One could easily be misunderstood while going through a rough season or a test. Some people have that “so what” attitude as it is not their season in the fire. If you want their sympathy, you might be wasting your time getting it. Don’t take it personal, for they have their own set of issues.

Deep aches are an inherit aggregate and total of experiences that could potentially be detrimental to the soul and spirit. It can be ancestral problems, relationships, surrounding difficulties, wrong choices and decisions that live deep within the soul if not dealt with responsibly. Stop them in their tracks immediately if you can. Sorry folk, again, we are not exempt from struggles. However, we must learn to say goodbye as we learn the lesson attached to them. Goodbye is inevitable as you start to truly identify bad attachments that hinder and slow the progress of your quest for wholeness. I said slow the progress, not stop it.

Deep ache can derive from a source that is closest to you. Deep aches can be epitomized when disagreements, misunderstandings, and the unexplainable that happens between you and someone else. Again, don’t take it personal – unless it gets abusive. Then you must seek help – whether it is professional or legal - because struggle against struggle empowers the flesh to retaliate. Have you ever seen an angry person? Have you ever conflicted with one? How does one remedy that? Watch out for false remedies, for they

can become potent instigators that pacify real problems. False remedies come in a variety of cases. Let's explore three (3) of them.

**False remedy #1: Burying the problem.**

Interruption in a personal bond, especially one that seems to be secure, hurts to the core. First thing that must happen in this situation is to just get through it. It's not as easy as it seems because the mind and heart always feel the impact of unresolved issues. Burying the problem is actually concealing, hiding, or submerging the matter with the intent of riddance. It can also at times, end up in exhumation; meaning that the dead can be unearthed and re-examined. Why not process it immediately before it has time to bring about negative results.

**False remedy #2: Denying the problem.**

You got hurt, but it doesn't matter. You'll just cry all night long and allow the heart to sulk, but it really doesn't matter. Please don't take that attitude. An old proverb advises us to "keep our heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." This means that we must guard our hearts with everything in us. If we continue to deny that we are hurt, in pain, struggling, or even mad as heck, we leave little room for healing. Sometimes we are our own enablers, unconcerned and complacent.

**False remedy #3: Giving inheritance to the problem.**

Passing the legacy on to others is a travesty. It's just like that ole curse that passes from one generation to the next. Never mind that our children deserve the kind of life that we had hoped for; never mind that the scars from incessant wounds, they'll grow up and learn for themselves; never mind the deep aches that continue their consistent pattern in the lives of its victims. There is definite resolve to these three and the many more that rear their ugly heads when challenged.

In all three (3) cases, resolution is to face and conquer false remedies. Finding balance in one's life tend to make us fighters. As fighters, we look forward to conquering any

struggle head on. It doesn't mean we must follow attitudes and behaviors of other fighters. But rather, learn from their mistakes as well as their successes.

Another thing, - what may have worked for our grandparents, may not necessarily work for our generation. People are different or rather unique. What affects some may not affect others. When there is an issue that renders one incapacitated, the one thing that may hinder healing for some, is seeking sympathy instead of resolve. Our confidence gets misplaced. "*Never give your confidence away to another*" was told to me once. It's a constant reminder that I must continue maturing into a woman who I will love and respect. Therefore, I must say goodbye to non-beneficials.

Identifying our goodbyes is necessity. Issues that have filtered into the heart need to be processed and eliminated. At some point in our lives, there will be another pain that finds its way into our heart. However, we will be more equipped to handle it. As we go through these lessons in this chapter, let's identify goodbyes and rid ourselves from them.

# Identifying Our Goodbyes

## WHAT GOODBYES NEED FROM US – DETACHMENT

Goodbyes are:

1. Issues Severed
2. Disconnection from people, places, and things
3. Finals with or without cause

Thought for today: Proverbs 4:23 – Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

IN this lesson you will learn to say goodbye to minor and major issues that attach themselves to our hearts and minds. When disconnect begins, the unhealthy desires of the flesh will start to diminish. We would hope that struggles will disappear suddenly, but this is not the case. However, the remembrance of them will be different. You might even laugh a time or two at your experiences. Enjoy the purge. This is the sort of purge that we should desire – to be whole with riddance of life's academic failures that tend to keep us in school for years.

Often, we are confronted with various issues, circumstances, people, and self-afflictions that pose a threat to our well-being. We must not discard the possibility of healing simply because others may not understand our situation. We may be judged, but don't give in to the slight. The condemning from others tend to prolong our suffering. Then our heart and conscience begin to condemn us because we have agreed with the adversary that things will not get better. But if you will agree with me this moment –we will strive for wholeness and fulfillment. Our life is not over yet. We still qualify to exist.

Thought for today: Proverbs 4:23 – Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

## Walk Out your Assignment

1. Condemnation is that which is of blame, guilt and declared by some as unfit for use. What have you experienced that has caused or is causing you to feel guilty or unfit?

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In what way have others declared you unfit?

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2. How do you walk through dysfunction?

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3. How do you view your circumstance?

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4. Do you feel you can overcome your circumstances?

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5. What does life of dysfunction mean to you?

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6. Are you living your best or worst life?

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7. Has anyone condemned you?

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8. If yes, do you accept or deny that condemnation?

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9. Is it difficult for you to walk in confidence while in your struggle?

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Identify Deep Aches that keep you from your best life.

Thought for today: Proverbs 4:23 – Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

## Fleshly desires

1. We often set our minds on tangibles, or might I say fleshly things, including individuals in our lives. Surrounding, positioning, and fixing our minds on fleshly things may eventually control us, and be more often than none, detrimental rather than beneficial.

How have certain decisions compromised or shaped your well-being?

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2. Walking after certain pleasures can dominated you. What are the things that are dominating your life now?

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3. Who and what is it that you *allow* to control you? Names need not be mentioned.

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4. The nature of man is always to be unrelenting and in control. Life does not always happen the way we want. If this is true for you, explain.

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5. How do you begin to release control to someone capable of assisting you in resolve?

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6. We find ourselves at times feeling hopeless but desiring to walk in a new life.  
How do you revive yourself when you feel hopeless?

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7. To whom and where does your commitment lie?

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Name Deep Aches that causes your flesh to continuously wage war against that which is  
best for you.

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Thought for today: Proverbs 4:23 – Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it is the issues of life.

## Life verses Death

1. The body is still mortal and is not only subject to death but also to the temptation of wrong decisions and wrong turns. Name the temptations that hinder your walk and are causing or have caused death. (Mentally, emotionally)

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2. How are you kept accountable to striving for wholeness?

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3. Imagine for a moment, the greatest life for you. Write your thoughts.

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4. What precautions are you taking to assure that you will be a good steward over your life?

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5. What does mortify the deeds of the flesh mean to you?

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6. Contemplating something to give up? What is it?

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7. Death signifies separation. Discuss ways to put to death those things that are not beneficial for you.

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This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Thought for today: Proverbs 4:23 – Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it is the issues of life.

## More than Conquerors

1. Conquerors are those who intend to fight their way into success, no matter what. What circumstance has made you feel unable to fight and succeed?

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2. There are circumstances that are self-engineered and instigated by others. Both can cause pain and distress, but often cause you to ask for help in eliminating them. Name those self-engineered circumstances.

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Name those engineered by others.

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3. What are you experiencing now that you're blaming others for?

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4. We can rest assured that as we encounter much in this lifetime, we can also overcome them. Name those things that you are still battling/trying to overcome.

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Name those things that you have conquered.

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5. We are persuaded by many things in life - whether that is career, financial, relationships, etc. By what persuasion has moved you to opposing interests?

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6. Conquerors win by force and experience little defeat themselves. Being victorious means that one has set their issues out to be destroyed and has no fear of battle scars that may occur. Having experienced battle scars, what keeps you moving forward without fear of losing?

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Identify Deep Aches that may stand in the way of being more than a conqueror.

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Thought for today: Proverbs 4:23 – Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it is the issues of life.

## Deep Aches

### FOR DISCUSSION

Example of Deep Ache:

Divorce

\*The emotions surrounding divorce could be: Hatred, disappointment, debt worries, depression, shame and guilt.

Identify the goodbye of divorce: Say goodbye to unforgiveness.

\*Goodbye to hatred may mean going back to that ex-husband/ex-wife and initiating forgiveness. It doesn't matter who did the offense. Reconciliation with love dissolves hatred.

### IDENTIFY DEEP ACHEs FOR ELIMINATION

#### Puzzle Pieces to Say Goodbye To

**Relationships:** Divorce or Separation

**Places:** Unsafe

Alimony, child support

Soul ties, abuse, neglect

**Addiction:** Substance abuse, debt, isolation

**Behaviors:** Violent, uncaring

Criminal behavior, obsession,

Abusive

Failure, Out of control, habits

Offensive

\*Stress related emotions can lead to stress related diseases. \*\*Recommended read:

“Deadly Emotions” by Dan Colbert

WEEK TWO

# THE PROCESS

Layers Off, Layers On, Level of Maturity

## WEEK TWO

### THE PROCESS

#### LAYERS OFF, LAYERS ON, LEVEL OF MATURITY

There are options to consider when advancing to another level of maturity. Some would say to gird yourself with proper armor when readying for possible battle; having the foreknowledge to discern the terrain; and being watchful of who and what is driving your success. But an important necessity is to move forward in confidence while shedding the load that hinders. We'll call this the peeling process.

One must always allow the peeling process to work. The notion is to peel away the singed self to reveal the authentic you. As debris, grub, and instability begin to fall away, new life begins to emerge with power. Let's agree together that life is better in balance rather than out of balance. When we are burdened with insurgents of negativity, we forget about the concern we need for ourselves.

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. This may be your season to get rid of old baggage, relationships, jobs, etc. The purpose of your life belongs to you. Is this the opportunity you've hoped for? It's up to you to live it, love it, and share it with those in your realm of influence.

## Layers off, Layers on, Level of Maturity

Layers are:

1. Bindings
2. Coatings
3. Coverings
4. Garments

Thought for today: Ecclesiastes 3:1 – To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.

Layers come in different forms and styles and take process to build up and process to tear down.

Processing is anything that is deliberately considered for recovering to or from.

**Process:**

\*Layers off (endings)

\*Layers on (beginnings)

\*= Level of Maturity.

In This lesson we'll learn how moving from pit experiences takes patience and perseverance.

We are no longer that old person who always make wrong choices and decisions. We become certain of who we are and where our future lays.



Thought for today: Ecclesiastes 3:1 – To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.

## Old Things are Passed Away

1. It excites me that we all have an opportunity to transform and succeed in life.  
What are you still holding on to that causes you not to succeed?  

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2. Change is always initiating in our lives, especially when we stray off the path to fulfillment. What makes it so difficult to trust and believe that you can become whole?  

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3. The old man of self-pity must be destroyed. Write down three old things that you are sure you must be disconnected from.  

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4. There are many pieces of the puzzle of your life that still holds bitterness, strife, jealousy, and any other emotion that hold guilt over your head. Name and release them.  

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5. Condemning yourself and allowing others to do the same is not good practice. Guilt and shame are two emotions that does not allow for healing in spirit, body and mind. Discuss.  

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The Process: Layers off (endings).

**\*\*Old thoughts, principles, and practices are all passed away.**

Commit to disconnect from yours because you have a future to look forward to:

[illegible]

Thought for today: Ecclesiastes 3:1 – To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.

## Behold, All Things Are Become New

1. Freshness, revival, cleanliness, structure, order, and organization are activity needed to become NEW. What does NEW mean to you?  

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2. When there is a sense of newness, it feels as if you have bathe in fragrant water and are wearing new garments. It can also feel as if you've been rescued from the worst situation ever. Have you ever felt this way and why?  

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3. A heart that have the motive to walk in honor, is a heart that has the protection of its owner. What would it be like to have a heart that honors and respect itself and others?  

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4. In order to be renewed in the spirit of your mind, you must put off anything that is corrupt and deceitful. Begin to change the way you speak of yourself and others. What are you saying about yourself or others that suggests the old you still control your thoughts and language?  

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5. After transitioning into a new you, are you mindful of the process of staying new?  

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The Process: Layers on (beginnings).

**\*\*The renewed you act from new principles, by new rules, with new ends, and in new company. List your new beginnings below:**

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Thought for today: Ecclesiastes 3:1 – To every thing there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven.

## All Things Are Beautiful

1. There is harmonized union that brings trust, security, protection, love, and an abundant life to those who seek it. What are the things that you could do to stay in commune with the beauty that surrounds you?

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2. What is harmonized union?

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3. What does a harmonized relationship look like to you?

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4. How can you influence the world around you to become interested in having a harmonized lifestyle that is beautiful?

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5. In a world filled with different expressions of beauty, what would be your expression of beauty?

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6. Can you see beauty in others, regardless of their struggles?

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The Process:

Trust, security, protection, love, and an abundant life are things we all strive for. Process through your struggle and find these things.

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Thought for today: Ecclesiastes 3:1 – To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.

## Your Role in Life

1. You represent someone more powerful than you think. Your assignment in life goes farther than you could imagine. Have you figured out your role in life, and if so, what is it?

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2. Do you believe that you have purpose, and can contribute to society while experiencing difficulties and hardships?

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3. Has anyone dismissed your efforts to contribute to life because of your hardships?

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4. Layers on means, putting off the old mindset and replacing it with a new mindset, priorities, and principles. If you haven't begun the renewal, are you ready to do so now?

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5. We all have been in the storms of life that rendered us at times disqualified to carry out certain task, duties, and assignments. You qualify to live your life. How are you preparing for it?

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6. In his speech, Martin Luther King Jr. emphasized that we are somebody. No matter what the color of our skin, race, creed, or color, we are somebody. What

has caused you to believe otherwise? Was it that abusive relationship? Is it that you don't fit in the category or in a certain class of people? List your reasons.

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The Process: Learning how to fulfill your role.

Being your best self requires patience, energy, and the will power to succeed in all that you do, and believe about yourself. List those things that would hinder you from being your best self.

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List those things that you know you can succeed at because you are as equality important as the next person.

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Thought for today: Ecclesiastes 3:1 – To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.

## Level of Maturity

1. Maturity develops when we understand the need for it. What has in times past been your way of processing to the next level of maturity?  

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2. What does natural growth mean to you?  

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3. Growing stability is recognizing that life involves balance. Balance for some mean to let go of the things that causes conflict of interest. What is causing such conflict that destabilizes your ability to grow?  

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4. Your next level of maturity has the potential to cause growing pains. Those growing pains may cause setbacks, grief, and/or brokenness. Many have gone through nervous breakdowns and emotional distress because of not knowing or understanding this type pain. Have you been disillusioned to believe that you are a victim that will never experience breakthrough?  

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5. As we grow and mature, we are aware of consequences that could debilitate us. If we are watchful, we can avoid danger. Are you watchful over your life?  

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6. In what ways are you maturing?

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7. Can you take inventory of your life and determine which of your attributes need transformation?

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The Process: Work it all out.

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WEEK THREE

# THE EXODUS

The Four R's

## The Four R's to Recovery

### The Exodus

Recovery is:

1. Recouping all that was lost
2. Regaining strength to continue to purpose
3. Obtaining favor

Thought for today: Recovery is different for everyone. Embrace yours. <i>Denise S. Taylor</i>
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In ~~This lesson~~ it entails the journey of recovery from brokenness that will be taken in four stages. The first stage will be to ~~recall~~; the second to ~~reflect~~; the third to ~~recognize~~; and the fourth is to ~~release~~. Enjoy your journey to freedom.

Thought for today: Recovery is different for everyone. Embrace yours. *Denise S. Taylor*

## RECALL

### The Journey Begins

**RECALL** – Defined as remembrance of things learned or experienced.

1. We find hope and relief in every new day. There are many ways to find optimism in bleak times of struggle. Recall moments when you felt you were defeated, and had to pick yourself up and get the help needed?

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2. All suffering can be traced back to any tragic event. Recall the events that warranted the consequences that you've suffered.

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3. Suffering tends to pry our attention away from the solution. Where has suffering taken you?

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4. Whatever we experience, it can either strengthen or destroy us. My friends, we are stronger than we think. Do you believe you have strength to overcome any obstacles you'll ever encounter?

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5. We all have faith to challenge any issue that may cause difficulties in our lives. Are you stable and consistent in your faith walk and believe that what you are experiencing will pass?

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## REFLECT – A Time to Meditate

**REFLECT** – To ponder and to think clearly.

1. Negative issues can corrupt the mind, leaving a trail of mistrust, hurt, pain, and even division. How can you guard a heart that receives bad news, abuse, addictions, heartaches, and distress and stop it from making life-changing decisions that are totally against your purpose in life?  

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2. We must make level paths that would help us avoid wrong relationships, wrong choices and things that would trip us up. Consider options carefully so that when unexpected situations arise in our lives, our discernment would quickly notice and discard it so it will not become part of us. Name those things that has tripped you up or has the potential to:  

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3. There is a place of confidence and security where one does not trip and fall over temptations or bad circumstances. Have you gotten to that place of confidence and security where nothing can sway or trip you? Explain yes or no.  

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4. We should scrutinize our own lives. We are too easy on ourselves and tend to be lenient in our examination of self. Does your situation/issue/circumstance cause you to be lenient on yourself?  

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5. As heavy as the weight of the struggle is, we must make haste to seek wholeness. What is holding you back from making haste to become whole?

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6. Ponder is a form of meditation. Meditation is a combination of reviewing, thinking, examining, and reflecting. It is even enjoyable as a physical, emotional and intellectual activity. After we have reflected on the things that we need to process through (the many issues), allow your thoughts to ponder and be filled with great and wonderful things that will lead you to a healthy lifestyle. Connect your thoughts to action. What are ways to ponder new thoughts for yourself?

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Reflecting:

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## RECOGNIZE It for What It Is

**RECOGNIZE** - To perceive clearly; to acknowledge with appreciation

1. We're all familiar with the Biblical story of Esther. She was one of many of the Kings' concubines with little or no real administrative power. And just as the others, it was possible she was not often called into his chambers. But there was a plan in the making to set the Jews free. I can only imagine the frightened Esther when her cousin Mordecai charged her to go into the king to make supplication on behalf of their people the Jews. She sent word back to Mordecai that no one goes into the king unless they are called. Her time to go into the king was not until 30 days. Mordecai's reply was that if she remained silent at that time, relief for the Jews would come from another place, but she along with them would perish. Esther **recognized** it for what it was. She was not willing to take that chance. What in your life has the potential to destroy you and your family that you are unwilling to take control, recognize it for what it is, and take action to stop it from happening?

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2. What are your action steps to eliminate the culprit of destruction in your life?

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3. If we examine our hearts and minds, and empty out the garbage, then are we able to move forward in great plans for our lives. What does empty out mean to you and how can you continue cleansing in your life?

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4. Recognizing weaknesses in our lives is the beginning of strength. What do you see as weakness in your life? Also, what has caused you to not face those things that seem inevitable?

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5. What happens to us if we keep silent about the difficulties we face?

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6. Why are you so sure that you will succeed if you don't expose those things that are damaging to you?

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7. We must appreciate and value life's lessons. After any test, we may no longer be the same. We would know that a wrong choice in relationships, career, and/or business, etc., cannot exist in our lives because we've had the season to study the pattern a little closer and scrutinize it's influence before it consumes us. Is the load in your life easier to bear and/or are you now recognizing that it is but to teach you a valuable lesson?

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Appreciating those things that were life's lessons:

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## RELEASE – Go Forth

1. I love the Book of Esther. Its' contents are full of power. The 10<sup>th</sup> chapter tells of how King Xerxes imposed tribute throughout the empire. And all his acts of power and might, together with a full account of the greatness of Mordecai to which the king had raised him, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Media and Persia. Mordecai was able to go forth and accomplish much for himself and his people the Jews. But not until the **release** came. He was now free to live an abundant life and not be afraid to step into his destiny. Do you know that you have a certain power that can work on your behalf?

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2. Power can create positions of status. What position of power do you see in yourself? Home, work, community?

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3. Wouldn't you like to enjoy the unlimited opportunities to shape lives and be trusted with such responsibility? How do you get there (release)?

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4. A lot of the times we do not know when or where we go next. Things, places, and even people seem foreign. Even if you don't know your next move, GO.

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5. What puts you at a disadvantage of going forward?

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6. "Go forth" is moving on a course that benefits the individual who partakes the journey. One is moving in a specific manner to the advantage of change. See and

plan your move knowing that it may not be an easy trip, but nevertheless, you are moving. What are some of your goals for going forth?

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Releasing:

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## No Looking Back

1. Soul ties are strong connections that cause us to “look back”. How could you rid the soul tie that keep you tied up? Let’s talk.

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2. What have been the consequences of your looking back?

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3. Reluctance will cause you to take one look too many at the life that has been burdensome to you. There are and will be times that will force us to flee a situation. What have you been forced to flee from?

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4. Things will become uncomfortable for you when it is time to flee/move or transition. But let it not be a struggle to get free. Just do it. The first step toward this goal for you would be:

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5. There are times that we are unwilling to separate ourselves from the world simply because of our friends, family, and loved ones. Are you willing to go forth and not look back anyway?

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6. Culture imposes itself on us. Our conscience at times is not bothered by what it proposes. What stronghold does your culture have on you and how do you break free from it?

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#### Examples of the Exodus

<u>The Exodus</u>		<u>Old Endings (Layers off)</u>	<u>New Beginnings (Layers On)</u>
1. Recall	>	1. Unforgiveness	1. Forgiveness
2. Reflect	>	2. Bad influence/relationships	2. New relationships
3. Recognize	>	3. The impact of the past	3. Plan future goals/dreams
4. Release	>	4. Failures	4. Goals to Success
Bridge the gap between failures & successes takes time. Be prepared for its season.			

PIECES OF ME NOTES

WEEK FOUR

# GOODBYE OLD ENDINGS

Bridging the Gap

## Bridging the Gap

Endings are:

1. Conclusions
2. Finished/Done

Thought for today: Ecclesiastes 3:6 – A time to get and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away.

In ~~This lesson~~ we'll learn how to begin again by taking steps and saying goodbye to old endings. Remember that procrastination *equals* stagnation. Stagnation *equals* no determination. No determination *equals* no motivation. Cast away the old endings to start afresh and new.



Thought for today: Ecclesiastes 3:6 – A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away.

## Face It. Trouble Is Around

1. When coming to an end of a season, moment, time, opportunity, and even the not so good things that happen to us in life, we must remember, we are still alive and well. How is it that you feel/know that you are at the end of a time and season in your life, and that something new is stirring?

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2. Although we suffer great distresses, we too can experience great things. What are you yearning for?

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3. An individual's troubles may not change overnight. Patience has it works. Often arrogance, denial and pride hold us back from moving forward.  
What position are you holding that stops you from moving past old endings?

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4. Name two of your old endings that you absolutely are having a struggle saying goodbye to:

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5. Name a time when you were delivered from a negative situation and others marveled that you did.

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6. From the above statement, you finally said goodbye to an old ending. Did you realize it was easy or difficult doing so?

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Name the troubles, say goodbye, and replace it with something positive. Name the positives replacements below:

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Thought for today: Ecclesiastes 3:6 – A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away.

## There is Help to get out of “being stuck”

1. Several years has passed since I’ve processed being stuck, depressed, overwhelmed and distressed. Amid my trouble, I found the strength to confront STUCK. How is your life being preserved through the many struggles that confronts you daily?

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2. What symbolizes strength, power, love, honor and authority for you?

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3. Circumstances do not always seem to conform to the process of wholeness/fulfillment. What is your situation?

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4. Can you recall self-imposed trouble that has come directly by wrong decisions/turns?

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5. Can you recall trouble that has come to you directly by someone else’s hand?

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Name the things that concern you. What are you doing about it?

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Thought for today: Ecclesiastes 3:6 – A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away.

## Recognize Substance in You

1. When we go through any type of brokenness, we rarely see the good in us until someone else does. Believe it or not, we are fearfully and wonderfully made. Have you gotten to that point in which you believe that you are a wonderful piece of work?

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2. We all have a present, past, and future. There are going to be things that would hurt and break us. How do you or have you dealt with longsuffering?

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3. We must be involved in every detail of our life. Is this your stand?

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4. Well before birth, the parents prepare for the role they must render in their child/children's development. However, there are issues they may face, such as the baby's birth defects, experience a miscarriage, adopting a child because of infertility. Can you see these issues having an impact on your life if occurred, and how would you seek healing?

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What do you feel has been missing out of your life as a parent or as a child?

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5. What did you carry in your dreams and aspiration that has suffered a miscarriage?

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6. What method of birth control have you used to stop the purpose and destiny for your life?

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7. The prenatal (that which takes place before birth) and neonatal (the care of the newborn) made you substance (potential, worth, and value). How do you nurture that for yourself?

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Thought for today: Ecclesiastes 3:6 – A time to get and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away.

## The Way we should go

1. If you have ever been to a Light House, the light beams far and wide. Consider the light house of your soul, and how it brings those things to the forefront that needs to be corrected/destroyed in your lives. How do you begin a search like this?  

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2. When our conscience is clear of debris and junk, we feel a sense of freedom. How do you free your conscience from junk/wrong thoughts and desires?  

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3. On February 8, 2006 at 1:56 am, I was awakened with this question on my mind, and wrote it down to recall often – “Are you running toward that which completes you?” I’ll ask you the same. Are you running toward that which completes you?  

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4. What has been your biggest test thus far?  

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5. When we are tested, our integrity and true character is often revealed. What has been revealed in you that you did not see before?  

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6. What and who is priority in your life?  

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## CHAPTER FIVE

# HELLO TO NEW BEGINNINGS

Bridging the Gap



## Bridging the Gap

Beginnings are:

1. To start fresh
2. Anew

Thought for today: Positive reinforcements are good. Make them great. *Denise S. Taylor*

In ~~This~~ lesson we will be bridging the gap to our new beginnings. It starts with a new determination, motivation, and insight. For the enabling of the perfect fit of your puzzle, you must understand that your failures and successes are most important for your learning experience. Nothing is wasted in your life, no matter what you've gone through.

### Opening Up to a Fresh Start

1. Just a reminder - we are a marvelous piece of work, full of substance. Our design is potential, worth, and value. Allow that seed to be planted in your heart and live it in integrity. What holds you back from believing this?

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2. We all need a fresh start in our lives. Getting through rough times warrants that excitement for **release**. But complacency rules if you're not willing to go that extra mile to rid yourself of the bad stuff. Seasons almost always come to an end in order to be promoted to the next level of maturity. What motivates you to get up and move into that next life promotion?

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3. Fear causes us to procrastinate at times, especially when we know “not” where we’re going. Do you have a plan for your fresh start? If not, now is the time to start writing the vision steps:

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4. Discovery yourself in each of these:

1) Potential

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2) Worth

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3) Value

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5. As we journey from one place to another, leaving friends, family, and loved ones, if necessary, we discover something even more awesome. That is the ability to reach and accomplish things we never thought we could. What are your steps to conquer fear and move to your goal of freedom?

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Thought for today: Positive reinforcements are good. Make them great. *Denise S. Taylor*

## Journeying Without Fear

1. Fear blocks unmerited favor, and births doubt and unbelief. We cannot afford to start afresh carrying old baggage into our new beginnings. If there is any blockage of fear, do you recognize it?  

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2. At times we go through barren lands when journeying to our new beginning. What are some of the things you've encountered while you were in your wilderness?  

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3. Listen, we cannot be haunted by apprehension because of the unknown. Venturing out into the unknown take faith. We concern ourselves with the difficulties that we see and feel. But when we realize how feeble we are in facing difficulties, the difficulties become giants and we become grasshoppers. How would you dispel apprehension?  

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4. Name the fears that are blocking you from recovery:  

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5. How do you eliminate the fears one by one?  

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6. How do you replace fears with courage?  

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Thought for today: Positive reinforcements are good. Make them great. *Denise S. Taylor*

## Day of Discussion

1. Take this time now to write down your feelings as you begin your transition.

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2. Are you able to relate to your former self that had issues?

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3. Are you able to relate to your new and fresh start?

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4. Both the former and present self can share the same puzzle. What does that look like to you?

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5. There are new expectations for you. What are they?

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Your expectation of your best self:

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Thought for today: Positive reinforcement are good. Make them great.

## Time for Restoration

1. Restoration means the state of being restored and given back that which was lost. Yes, we've all lost quite a bit over the years – eaten up are our finances, our relationships, our health, or even our spirituality. How are you restoring the things you lost?

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2. Just like locusts, we go through devastated times. Address a plague that you've experienced that has brought destruction.

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3. A palmerworm is a chewing or gnawing locust. The stage at which the locust is first hatched is characterized by its gnawing activity. Whatever it gnaws, it also wears it away. The persistent biting and nibbling are irritating. What is it that continues to gnaw at you with persistence and cause irritation?

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4. The cankerworm refers to the crawling locust, meaning to lick off and is the stage in which it does its destructive work. Crawling has a connotation of creeping. It is a slow process in destroying its target. What is licking away at you that you can't seem to get a handle on even get to the root cause of it?

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5. The caterpillar is the consuming locust. It is the final stage in which the locust reaches its full growth and devours everything in its path. The locust has a way of consuming without ever being detected. How can you become better watchman or overseer of your life?

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Thought for today: Positive reinforcements are good. Make them great. *Denise S. Taylor*

## Blessings

1. Imagine enjoying all sorts of delicacies and sharing them with others. You are well on your way to recovery. Are you willing to share how you got there?  

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2. Who and what are you giving credit to?  

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3. How are you growing and developing in this season of change?  

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4. Obese individuals have gotten there by improper nutrition. At times they eat to be full, not considering contentment, nor desire any other sort of food that is suggestive of good health. Image this as your plight. List ways to continuously flow in good health, spiritually, mentally, physically, and emotionally, etc.  

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5. How do we recognize that you are being successful at transition?  

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## CHAPTER SIX

# TOTAL LIFE INVESTMENT

Life Anew

## Total Life Investment

Investments are:

1. Advantages
2. Endowments
3. Favor

Thought for today: Invest wisdom, stature, and favor into your life. It comes out –  
**BALANCE.** *Denise S. Taylor*

In This lesson is we will learn to invest in ourselves in spirit, body, and mind. **BALANCE.**  
We'll learn how to walk in the present keeping an open mind that stuff happens. We can  
conquer obstacles by abandoning the thought that we can't. Let's get to work on that.



Thought for today: Invest wisdom, stature, and favor into your life. It comes out –  
*BALANCE. Denise S. Taylor*

## Old Things are Gone

1. The journey is always movement. We encounter good and bad along the way. However, as we move forward into destiny, the elements all around us tend to dictate challenges and risks. We must not get comfortable waiting for the process to disable negatives. What's hard for you to abandon that has influenced your choices?  

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2. When facing our greatest trial, we'll encounter someone or something that will help navigate us through the rough terrain, with provision to help along the way. Do you see provision that has been set for you OR have you a misplaced loyalty in people or things that have inconsistently provided for you?  

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3. Our life is new every single day. What is it that you see today that you didn't have this time last year? (Ex: spiritual maturity, wisdom, passion, debt freedom, genuine friendships, etc.)  

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4. What have you discovered that has fallen away from your life and you did not miss it or realize it was gone?  

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5. What way has been made for you in your barren state?  

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6. What streams has been carved out for you in your wasteland?

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7. In this new place of grace, we shall never be in lack. Even the beast of the field, the birds of the air, and the flowers are satisfied. According to your previous experience in lack, do you feel you've been blessed beyond measure or are you still functioning in lack?

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8. Make agreement now to leave the old stuff in the past. Let go of the unforgiveness against your brother; let go of the criticism against your friend; learn to love your enemies. Agree? Agree!!

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## Walk Circumspectly

1. Circumspectly means to walk upright and to consider carefully all circumstances and consequences. A Scripture verse in Galatians 6:7 says, “Whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap.” There is nothing that stops the consequence of any action. Whether it is good or bad, you shall see the fruits of that action. How do you live a life that reaps great and awesome benefits from sowing good things?

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Bad things? \_\_\_\_\_

2. We all have a nature about us that constantly wages war against our flesh. What war is going on inside you (your nature) that cause a searing of the conscience? (This question is meant to open dialog, not to embarrass anyone).

3. Conflict grows inside an individual who does not examine his/her life carefully. Sometimes one does willfully, and even justify wrongful actions. If one is to walk upright, what is the path he/she must take in order to avoid pitfalls?

4. Our character can come under scrutiny at times. Do you recognize wrong behavior in yourself? If so, do you make excuses for yourself and blame others for what you should be responsible for?

5. How would you redirect your interests to invest and indulge in those things that are good and wholesome?

Thought for today: Invest wisdom, statue, and favor into your life. *Denise S. Taylor*

## Bear Good Fruit

1. “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering (patience), kindness (meekness), goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (temperance).”  
How would you develop these fruits/attributes in your life?

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2. Which of these attributes have been the toughest to acquire? Explain.

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3. Do you see a generational passion or desire that has become your pattern of life?

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4. There is nothing wrong with passions and desires if they are wholesome and beneficial for you and others in your sphere of influence. Let’s discuss.

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5. What interrupts your flow of prosperity and well-being?

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6. Faith without works is dead. How do you work out the kinks in your life and move forward in wholeness, fulfillment, and willingness to accept it?

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Thought for today: Invest wisdom, statue, and favor into your life. *Denise S. Taylor*

## Give No Offense in Anything

1. Webster's Dictionary gives definition of offense as a misdeed. If we allow scrutiny of ourselves to someone who can properly discern our situation, then our walk will be much smoother to the road of success. Are you truly on the right road? (This question is meant to open up dialog. Do not be fearful of answering truthfully).

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2. We as humans are often judged as those who should have character and integrity that is far above the normal standard. We should not be a stumbling block to offend anyone; but to be a role model for those who have not found their way in life. Are you a stumbling block to someone or is someone a stumbling block to you, causing an offense?

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3. Whether hardships, distresses, sleeplessness, or hunger, our goal is to make sure that we invest in the upkeep of a life fulfilled. Are you doing this?

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4. Are you committed to your full potential?

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5. We can have victory over any circumstance if we take the time to process through the storms toward worthiness. Getting unstuck is a chore. Are you stuck and don't know how to overcome it?

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## No Middle Ground or Compromise/Clean It Up

1. Compromise can lead to consequences that are most likely not completely agreed upon. And life tends to have a way of lending ideas, concepts and yes, even agreements. Those agreements may mean settling for less than the best in health, careers, and even relationships. Have you settled for less or living your dream life?

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2. What do you think unequally yoked means? In marriage or a business?

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3. How much can we associate with those that are not on the same path as we are?

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4. There is no room for linking something false with what is true. There really can be no middle ground; either we discipline ourselves to accommodate the new life or sell out to that which makes us fail. Which is it for you?

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5. Are you finding it hard to separate yourself from those who you've come to love even if they don't have your best interest at heart?

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6. Challenge yourself to the best life ever. Where will you start?

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

# GOALS, DECISION MAKING, & COMMITMENT

Vision Manifested

## Goals, Decision Making, & Commitment

### Vision:

1. Sight/Insight
2. Revelation of walking by faith and not by sight
3. Vivid picture created with wisdom

Thought for today: Having self-confidence is the start of a great and beautiful commitment. *Denise S. Taylor*

This final lesson is one that you must make part of your mentorship. We all have goals and aspirations that we strive for in the spirit of excellence. There is a saying that “failure is not an option.” But remember, failure is the *stepping-stone* toward success. We can’t have success without it. For that is a learning ground that we must explore and research for better understanding – to not repeat those things that caused us to fail. These sessions will cause you to probe a bit inward and to express your most wanted allegiance. Set your time to carefully write out your vision, making it plain, and along with everyone else that reads it, RUN.

### Decision Making

1. Learn to step down (analyze/examination)
2. Decide what you are going to do with your life and make the plans to do so.
3. Your future becomes definite as you allow change (new level of maturity).

### Goals

1. Make plan.
2. Initiate Plan.
3. Follow through
4. Follow up.

### Commitment

The Process is on-going as your life continues to unfold.

PROCESS = Layers off = layers on = level of maturity.



Thought for today: Having self-confidence is the start of a great and beautiful commitment. *Denise S. Taylor*

## Standing Watch

1. What does standing watch mean to you?

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2. Standing watch is representative as one standing guard against possible invasion and/or to watch for messengers that has lent themselves to the good of the cause. In this position one can see beyond the barriers, walls, and is the first to see danger. Are you waiting and watching patiently for a resolve from issues?

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3. Sometimes we convince ourselves that we can get through the struggle without help from anyone. We want to figure it out on our own. Is this your struggle – trying to figure out things or trying to figure out you?

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4. Be very watchful, for there is always an adversary lurking and prowling around to devour progress forward. How can you keep this from happening?

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5. Set your mind on positive things that are beneficial for your well-being. Are you developing and watching over your thoughts so as not to give in to temptations that may lead you from your wholesome goals?

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6. There are many voices competing for your attention. Who are you listening to?

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Thought for today: Having self-confidence is the start of a great and beautiful commitment. *Denise S. Taylor*

## The Vision Answer

Write the vision exercise.

1. We can get done whatever we are seeking. Let's write the vision down and make it plain. This is the first step and prerequisite to the vision coming to past. Let's write: (Take 15 minutes).

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2. Back in ancient days it was a common practice of writing public notices with large characters on clay tablets. Whenever someone came running by it they were able to easily read what was on them. Today, we must make it a practice to journal our plan and carry it out. Have you made a clear plan? If not, let's write with clarity now. (Take 15 minutes).

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### PIECES OF ME NOTES

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Thought for today: Having self-confidence is the start of a great and beautiful commitment. *Denise S. Taylor*

## Certainty is a Scarce commodity

If individuals are willing to invest in themselves, they can achieve greater certainties in their everyday decision-making processes. For example, there are many different negative pulls in life that will cause us to take two steps backward for every step forward. But when we believe in ourselves enough to get rid of baggage that weighs us down, we begin to make decisions that propel us forward in life.

1. Writing those things that you are believing for yourself.

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2. Write those things that you believe causes you to take two steps backwards for every step forward you make.

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3. There is such a thing as genuine faith put into action. How have your faith been tested over the last year, month, or week as you journey forward in destiny?

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4. We give up too easily right before our breakthrough or the birth of our dreams and vision come to past. Imagine this. What if a pregnant woman in the delivery room decides to keep her legs closed and not deliver her baby whose head has crowned? The potential is that the baby may not survive the ordeal and the witnesses would not have a chance to feel the joy that a newborn brings. What dream or possibility have you killed lately?

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[illegible]

The design of our lives continues to unfold.

# CONCLUSION

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### PIECES OF ME, A PERFECT FIT

“To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven:  
A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck what is planted;  
A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;  
A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;  
A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones; a time to embrace, and a time to  
refrain from embracing;  
A time to gain, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away;  
A time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;  
A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.”

Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8

A puzzle has many pieces, and it takes time to put them all together. Time has the most pieces to its section, because in this place you are being shaped and sharpened to fit.

A puzzle also represents or symbolizes a season. Once the pieces are organized for structure, (time), then season begins. In this position is power because not only is this the appointed place to be but it's time to act on the things that you have been given insight. Also, in this place you realize that season is an opportunity, you take what you know and put each piece in their precise/particular position.

The puzzle then goes into the phase of purpose. This is the goal that has been determined and acted upon to reach. Realizing that you finally have all the pieces put together, you can then begin to walk in the fullness of life. Not only is the goal attainable, but it can be accomplished precisely.

**Time, season, and purpose** are a continual movement to stay in the flow of life. Each phase will take you to the next level of maturity.

Where have transition in life taken you, and what has it made you today? There are and will be obstacles that will confront and try to dictate a life that may totally be opposite of your purpose. Learn to live out each piece of your puzzle, knowing that nothing that you've gone through is wasted. There is a season for everything in your life. Embrace it with cheer.

*"To everything there is time, a season for every purpose under heaven."*

Take every moment of your life and make a difference in accomplishing every dream and aspiration. Make your puzzle a great one.